**Appendix A - Teacher Notes**

Minds On

Any ideas what is meant by the term “genohype”?

* *“hyped” portrayal of both the benefits and risks associated with genetic research and the application of genetic technologies*

Who do you think is behind “genohype”, the journalists or scientists?

* *May not always be the journalists as many scientists are under pressure to "make their research sound exciting and immediately applicable"*

(*clarify that scientists write journal articles and journalists report their findings in magazines, newspapers, on the news and other forms of media)*

# Think-Pair-Share- Pros and Cons of media involvement of genetic research

# *Gather a few ideas before moving onto article*

# *Pro- allows general public to be updated on issues related to medicine and health*

# *Cons- exaggeration may lead public to be misinformed or have a skewed view on issues*

# Article- “Do the print media “hype” genetic research? A comparison of newspaper stories and peer-reviewed research papers” from the Canadian Medical Association Journal (2004)

# *In this study they found that most newspaper articles are written by in-house specialist science and technology or medical journalists*

# *Read article summary together*

# What is your reaction to the findings? Are you surprised?

# Do you think there is harm in reporting the benefits? Why or Why not?

# *sensationalization of genetics may have an adverse impact on the public’s ability to participate in policy discussions and on the utilization of genetic services because it creates inflated perceptions of the value of, for example, specific genetic tests (inflates expectations for general public and special interest groups such as patients and investors)*

# *by reporting only benefits they leave out the risks, for instance reports on new prescription drugs often leave out harmful side effects*

# Why might there be an under-representation of risks in both scientific and newspaper articles?

# *Scientists do not want to emphasize costs or risks because they have their own agenda too*

# Are there any limitations to this study?

# *Researchers only looked at print media (and only those related to peer reviewed articles and published abstracts)*

# This study looked only at articles in respected newspapers, such as the Globe and Mail, Wall Street Journal, Guardian, etc. How might this affect the results and implications of the study?

# *These papers may have more journalists with science backgrounds affects the results and given that they are not circulated as highly as other tabloids may not be representative of what the public is reading*

# *Don’t take everything you see or read as the absolute truth and be sure to analyze where information comes from. Bear in mind that a few exaggerated articles may discredit all others in the public’s opinion. Try to understand that genetics is a relatively new field of study and it will take time to fully understand the complexity of many genetic issues. With that in mind it is an exciting field with advancements occurring in technology and implications for many other areas of science (health, environment, evolution, etc.)*